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*'What if Grissom were Negro?'*

In complaining because Maj. Robert H. Lawrence was not eulogized for his part in the space program, L.F. Palmer Jr. may have a point although others beside Grissom, Chaffee and White have been killed working on space projects and their names have gone unmentioned.

To report rumors and repeat statements such as that of an unidentified black who said, "They killed that Negro," is using McCarthy tactics and injuring chances of other fine Negroes being chosen for astronaut training.

What if Grissom, Chaffee and White had been Negro?

Would the space agency be charged with triple murder? Space travel and training is dangerous business and NASA has problems enough without dealing with false charges of murder because of race.

Incidentally, the iron workers' trade is also a dangerous one and the reason so few Negroes have been accepted into the union, which has a large proportion of Indians, is because of a fear of false charges being raised if a Negro iron worker should do what many iron workers of other races have done and fall

to his death off a building. They don't want anyone saying, "Somebody pushed him."

ARTHUR JOHNSON

Chicago

Palmer seems to want his people to believe the major was killed deliberately by CIA or the military because of his color. I wonder how they could figure a plane crash that would kill a black man and save the white.

He didn't mention anything about the three white men who were burned to death at Cape Kennedy. Would he want us to believe that some Negro sabotaged that flight?

CHARLES GEE

Harrisburg, Ill.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Palmer cited the CIA rumor to indicate how unfounded stories develop in an air of mistrust; he had no intention of endorsing such a theory.

Palmer's own survey indicated that while most TV and press commentaries mentioned other spaceman casualties in addition to Grissom, White and Chaffee, they failed to mention Lawrence.

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